(c) what special steps have been taken to curb the increasing number of railway accidents?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) There were 206 consequential train accidents on the Indian Railways during the period 1.1.95 to 30.6.95. Zone-wise break-up of these accidents as as under:—

Railway	No. of accidents
Central	19
Eastern	12
Northern	43
North Eastern	18
Northeast Frontier	12
Southern	30
South Central	15
South Eastern	38
Western	19
Total	206

(b) As per provisional information, 117 accidents were caused due to failure of railway staff, 39 due to failure of persons other than railway staff, 28 due to equipment failure, 5 due to incidental factors and 3 due to sabotage while 14 cases arc under investigation.

199 persons lost their lives and 508 sustained injuries in these accidents.

Cost of damage to railway property in these accidents has been estimated as Rs. 18.67* crores.

(c) Some of the measures taken to reduce the number of accidents are:—

(i) Nearly 17,000 drivers with less then 10 years active driving service and 40,000 station staff have been subjected to special screening and those found deficient were given crash training.

(ii) Two high-level safety teams have been making extensive spot checks and inspections of field installations and practices.

(iii) stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal or removal from service is being imposed on staff causing serious train accidents.

(iv) Elimination of collisions have been made one of the mission areas for the General Managers of the Indian Railways

(v) Instant Action Groups have been formed on certain nominated trains to check entry of unauthorised passengers in reserved coaches and persons carrying inflamablc/explosive material.

(vi) Carriage and Wagon examination of rolling stock has been strengthened and rationalised.

(vii) Track circuiting works on Rajdhani and Shatabdi routes have been speeded up.

(viii) Overdue track renewals on all important routes are being liquidated.

(ix) Regular inspections are carried out by Officers, Inspectors and Supervisors to ensure that the staff follow the correct rules and procedures.

(x) Modern safety aids like track circuiting, panel interlocking, axle counter, etc. have been provided to improve safety.

Illicit Transportation of Timber from River Godavari in A.P.

384. SHRI T. VENKATRAM REDDY:
SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that additional vigilance is required for protecting valuable task and rose wood forests of forest ranges along river Godavari in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether huge quantities of logs are transported illigally on the river Godavari

(c) to what extent Government have assisted the State Forest Department in Andhra Pradesh to curb such illicit transportation of timber on the river Godavari; and

from June to September, every year during the flood season;

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (d) Information is being collected from State Government of Andhra Pradesh and will be laid on the table of the House.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH); (a) Yes, Sir. the Garhwal and Kumaon hills of Uttar Pradesh witnessed large scale forest fires during the May-June 1995. As per report of the UP Government the area affected by forest fires in Kumaon Hills in 334 Sq. Kms and Garhwal Hills is 597 Sq. Kms.

(b) The Government has appointed a two member Committee on 11.7.1995 to enquire into the causes of the forest fires, the extent of damage to the forest wealth and formulate a strategy to prevent the occurrance of such forest fires in future in these areas. The team will submit its report within a month.

Fire in Upper Reaches in Himalaya in Garhwal and Kumaon

385. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hundreds and thousands of acres of forest in the upper reaches of Himalaya in Garhwal and Kumaon were ravaged by forest fires in June this year;

(b) if so, the extent of damage; and how far the fires were spotaneous or natural and how far the same were caused by men and vested interests; and

(c) whether the forest fires in these forests is an annual feature; if so, the comparative figures of damage caused during 1993 and 1994?

(c) Yes, Sir. the comparative figures for 1993 and 1994 are 18 Sq. Kms and 60 Sq. Kms respectively.

Strengthening of Administrative Units to Check Criminalization in Delhi

386. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of incidents of murder, rape and kidnapping in Delhi were more than that of in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in the past years;

(b) if not, what is total number of each of these crimes which have taken place in